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ABSTRACT

This paper assesses public and private, four-year college or university faculty satisfaction in the context of the complexity of satisfaction and the importance of the interaction between faculty professional values or expectations and institutional values. Satisfaction is defined as the extent to which faculty perceive that the institution provides a climate ensuring professional autonomy and activity commensurate with specialized expertise. Data were obtained from the 19-item Likert-type scale used on the National Survey of Postsecondary Faculty, 1988; a parallel analysis was also performed to provide additional confirmation of results. Mission was classified by four of the Carnegie categories for baccalaureate-granting institutions: research, doctoral, comprehensive, and liberal arts. The most noteworthy results center around the complexity of satisfaction and the need for congruence of institutional mission and individual goals. A principal components analysis was conducted for items reflecting satisfaction that yielded three distinct factors associated with satisfaction: collegiality, workload, and autonomy. Analysis of variance procedures determined that there is a significant effect of mission on satisfaction with collegiality and workload but not with autonomy. Findings confirm the complexity of faculty satisfaction based on a very strong need for collegiality between faculty and between faculty and administration. Implications for research include the challenge to expand the exploration of faculty satisfaction by including the influence of personal professional variables, such as tenure status and academic discipline. (Contains 19 references.) (Author/NAV)

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Faculty Satisfaction with Institutional Support as a Complex Concept: Collegiality, Workload, Autonomy

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ABSTRACT

The last decade of the Twentieth Century has witnessed unprecedented challenges to the structure and culture of higher education. The shrinking availability of grant support coupled with public demand for accountability has resulted in criticism from within and outside the academy, escalating competition among faculty to attract external funding and internal resources, and increasing the tension between research and teaching.

The purpose of this study was to consider faculty satisfaction in the context of two premises: first, the complexity of satisfaction, and second, the importance of the interaction between faculty professional values (expectations) and the institutional values (norms, culture) manifest in the mission.

Data was obtained from the National Survey of Postsecondary Faculty - 1988 (NSOPF-88). College/university mission was represented by institutional type categorized by Carnegie classification: Research, Doctoral, Comprehensive, and Liberal Arts (Carnegie Council, 1987). Principal Components Analysis was conducted for items reflecting satisfaction, which was determined to consist of three factors: Collegiality, Workload, and Autonomy. Next, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) procedures determined that there was a significant effect of mission on satisfaction with collegiality and workload but not autonomy.

Implications for research include the challenge to expand the exploration of faculty satisfaction by including the influence of personal professional variables (such as tenure status and academic discipline). Administrators can take a proactive stance to enhance practice by maintaining an institutional climate that fosters collegiality and working with faculty to redefine scholarship.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this exploratory study was to identify the components of faculty members' satisfaction with institutional support for their professional activities (i.e., teaching and research) and to determine whether a relationship exists between institutional mission and satisfaction. Satisfaction was defined as the extent to which faculty members perceive that the institution provides a climate ensuring professional autonomy and activity commensurate with their specialized expertise. The promotion of an institutional climate conducive to carrying out the teaching-research-service enterprise of the professoriate is of particular importance due to the recent public pressure on higher education to establish accountability by satisfying outcomes assessment criteria. The decreased opportunities for mobility due to a shrinking academic job market and the trend toward dual-career families have resulted in increasing numbers of faculty remaining at one institution for extended periods, a trend that will be influential for some time. In order to foster faculty ownership in their institution, the components of satisfaction are worth identifying.

Since administrators play a key role in establishing and maintaining the climate in which faculty perform their professional activities, support was considered an enabling--

rather than evaluative--factor, that is, ensuring appropriate optimum conditions as opposed to satisfying preconceived criteria. The focus on conditions that shape the context for carrying out the responsibilities of the professoriate is particularly timely in light of the growing interest within the academy for a serious reexamination of faculty roles and rewards in the context of institutional missions.

Theoretical Framework

Each institution of higher education is responsible for the support of the professional activities of its faculty which enable its core productive activities--teaching and research--to be carried out. This study is grounded in the assumption that to the extent that faculty perceive institutional support for their professional activities they will likely derive satisfaction from their work and manifest loyalty to their employing institution.

In the context of faculty satisfaction with support, this investigation was based upon the following theoretical framework:

1. faculty satisfaction with support is derived from the interaction of professional values (expectations) with institutional values (culture, norms) in their attempt to fulfill the research-teaching-service responsibilities of the professoriate within the context of the institutional culture (Boyer, 1990; Diamond, 1993);

2. since faculty are already motivated by intrinsic performance factors (satisfiers) inherent in the nature of their professorial responsibilities, their satisfaction with institutional support is a reflection of the institution's ability to minimize negative environmental conditions (dissatisfiers) (Bland & Ruffin, 1992; Diener, 1984; Herzberg, et al., 1959);

3. administrators are responsible for creating and maintaining a climate conducive to faculty satisfaction (Bess, 1988), of which faculty "ownership" of the mission is an important element (Rice & Austin, 1988).

METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS

Data Source

The 1988 National Survey of Postsecondary Faculty (NSOPF-88), conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) from December 1987-October 1988, provides a comprehensive data set for a study of faculty satisfaction with institutional support. The data was accessed with the permission of NCES in order to acquire data beyond the capabilities of an individual researcher.

Data Screening for Institutional Mission

Preliminary data screening of survey items considered representative of the institutional type/mission resulted in this variable being represented by four of the Carnegie categories for baccalaureate-granting institutions -- research, doctoral, comprehensive and liberal arts. The derivation of this variable merits a brief explanation.

For the purpose of this project the responses from public and private institutions were combined because preliminary analysis indicated that they were not significantly different from each other and the number of institutions in each strata was uneven. Furthermore, the liberal arts institutions only included the private sector. This arrangement limited the sample to those institutions offering the minimum of the bachelors degree (as in Bailey, 1993; Fairweather, 1993), thereby eliminating the two-year colleges, independent medical schools,

religious colleges and the miscellaneous category. The rationale for this restriction were that first, these institutions were not stratified by disciplinary area, a factor considered to be of importance to other research in the planning stages, which would be subsequently based upon this study (Pollicino, 1995), and second, the two-year institutions have been found to possess a climate and culture with markedly different interaction with satisfaction than baccalaureate institutions (Spencer, et al., 1989).

Principal Components Analysis

The dependent variable of satisfaction was initially represented by faculty responses to a Likert-type scale of 19 statements addressing adequacy of institutional and departmental funding for activities as well as satisfaction with conditions for teaching and research (i.e., professional authority and autonomy, institutional mission and philosophy, administrative and faculty leadership, quality of chief campus administrators, relationship with colleagues, teaching and research assistance, and support services). Factor analysis (specifically, principal components analysis) was performed in order to produce a more manageable representation of satisfaction by "reducing a large number of variables down to a smaller number of components" (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1989, p. 626). Promax was used since this SAS method has the advantage of generating an orthogonal (varimax) pre-rotation followed by an oblique rotation, which yielded three well-defined factors (a total of 15 items).

In order to provide additional confirmation to these results, a parallel analysis (PA) was performed, creating a second correlation matrix from a randomly-generated data set with the identical number of subjects and variables as the actual data (See Table 1). The criteria

for determining the number of factors is the number of eigenvalues from the actual data that exceed the values of their counterpart eigenvalues from the random structure (Horn, 1965; Humphreys & Ilgen, 1969).

Table 1

Results of Parallel Analysis of NSOPF and Random Data Sets

	Eigenvalues					
Factor	1	2	3	4	5	6
NSOPF	5.71	1.62	1.16	0.99	0.90	0.79
Random	1.10	1.08	1.06	1.05	1.04	1.03

The three retained factors accounted for a combined total of 53 percent of the variance, and were labeled Collegiality, Workload and Autonomy, respectively, based upon the loadings and the literature on these dimensions (see Table 2). Loadings equal to or greater than .45 (20 % overlapping variance) were interpreted because there was a considerable gap between this mark and the remaining values. Because oblique rotations output multiple loadings, one had to be determined appropriate for interpretation. The rotated factor pattern was selected because it measures the unique variable-factor relationship by eliminating common variance (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1989). This matrix of pattern coefficients serves to give the standardized weights of the variables regressed on the oblique factors which are preferable for factor interpretation (Cattell, 1962).

Table 2

Promax Rotated Factor Pattern Loadings for Faculty Satisfaction

Factor				
C	W	A	h^2	Source of Satisfaction
.75	.14	-.10	.62	Faculty-administration relations
.73	.13	-.11	.59	Quality of chief administrators
.73	-.09	.14	.56	Faculty spirit of cooperation
.72	-.04	-.00	.50	Faculty leaders: Senate/Council
.69	.07	.01	.53	Institutional mission/philosophy
.66	-.01	.12	.49	Interdepartmental cooperation
.48	-.18	.40	.43	Quality: department colleagues
-.13	.81	.09	.63	My workload
-.00	.73	.20	.66	Req'd mix: teaching, research, administration & service
-.03	.72	.03	.51	Time for advisement, mentoring
.36	.51	-.15	.49	Research facilities and support
.35	.48	-.12	.44	Support services and equipment
-.07	.02	.80	.62	Auth'ty: course content/method
-.07	.28	.53	.41	My job security
.43	-.07	.46	.49	Quality: department leadership
3.06	2.02	1.41		Eigenvalues

Notes. C = Collegiality, W = Workload, A = Autonomy, h^2 = communalities. Sum of eigenvalues and communalities are not equal due to oblique rotation.

Analysis of Variance

A key premise of this study was the assumption that institutional mission exhibits a significant effect on faculty satisfaction, which consists of three factors (collegiality, workload, autonomy). Results of the analysis of variance of institutional type (as an independent variable) and satisfaction with collegiality, workload and autonomy (dependent variables) are presented in Table 3. It was determined that institutional type has a significant effect on faculty satisfaction with collegiality and workload at the .01 level. The effect of institutional mission on satisfaction with autonomy was not significant. Means and standard deviations of these scores are listed in Tables A1 through A3.

Tukey post hoc multiple comparison tests were used to determine the institutional type(s) responsible for these significant results. In particular, it was found that faculty in Liberal Arts colleges reported significantly higher levels of collegiality than their colleagues in other types of institutions (Table A1), and that faculty in Research universities reported significantly higher levels of satisfaction with workload than their colleagues in other types of institutions (Table A2).

Table 3

Analysis of Variance of Institutional Type on Satisfaction

Variable	df	MS	F	n^2
Collegiality				
Carnegie	3	31.27	32.41*	.025
Error	3805	.96		
Workload				
Carnegie	3	33.54	34.50*	.026
Error	3805	.97		
Autonomy				
Carnegie	3	2.21	2.22	.002
Error	3805	.99		

* $p < .01$

CONCLUSIONS

The most noteworthy developments resulting from this research center around the complexity of satisfaction and the need for congruence of institutional mission and individual goals. Results of the principal components analysis yielded the identification of three distinct factors associated with satisfaction (i.e., collegiality, workload and autonomy). Collegiality was comprised of items describing the institution's work environment and value system. Faculty satisfied with collegiality indicated a perception of an atmosphere of positive administrative and faculty relationships, leadership, and cooperation (institution-wide as well as inter- and intra-departmental), and endorsement of the institutional mission/philosophy.

Workload items addressed the conditions for carrying out the different professorial responsibilities (teaching, research, service) and confidence in the quality and availability of support services, facilities, and equipment. This factor reflects not only the commitment of faculty members to carry out their complex responsibilities but their expectation for support in doing so. Time management, especially between different areas of responsibility at the level of the individual, is a challenge for faculty facing departmental, college and institutional expectations for teaching, research, and service.

Autonomy was measured by confidence in personal authority to make decisions about instructional matters, as well as job security and the quality of departmental/program leadership. It appears important that a faculty member feel that he/she has the opportunity to exercise personal professional autonomy and that this perception is linked to job security. While in the position of third factor, autonomy is nevertheless an influential dimension in that it is essential that a faculty member strike the right balance between exercising personal

professional authority and contributing as a citizen of both the institutional and disciplinary academic communities.

Results of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) indicate that institutional mission has a significant effect on faculty satisfaction with collegiality and workload, suggesting that a college or university carries with it a series of contextual expectations, values and norms. Specifically, faculty from Liberal Arts colleges indicated a higher level of collegiality than those at other institutions; faculty from research universities expressed greater satisfaction with workload than colleagues at other institutions.

These results provide insight into the complex nature of a faculty member's affiliation with institution, college and department. Conditions that may lead to satisfaction in institutions with a particular mission may not necessarily have the desired results across the other institutional types. Furthermore, situations that are conducive to satisfaction with collegiality or workload may not have any influence on autonomy (or any combination of the three factors).

IMPLICATIONS

This exploratory study contributes to the higher education research in that the results affirm the complexity of faculty satisfaction, challenging administrators to consider the multidimensionality of this concept. The need for collegiality as the strongest factor is noteworthy in that the relationship between administrators and faculty as well as the importance of the institutional mission are prominent; faculty therefore consider collegiality to be substantially more than their relationships with each other. The workload factor's concern with the combination of varied duties reflects the timeless challenge of the

professoriate in the context of the external pressures for accountability faced by higher education as we conclude this century. Related to these issues is the need for autonomy--the third factor--which is what attracts many to the academy but is coming under scrutiny from within and outside higher education as the concept of tenure is questioned. These results reflect the challenges faced by higher education in this age of public intervention; administrators and faculty must work together to shape the future.

In addition, the recommendation that institutions need to assume responsibility for both aggressive faculty socialization and development processes has implications for practice. Administrators need to be proactive in developing an institutional climate that will foster collegiality through careful and consistent articulation of the mission, encouraging faculty involvement in matters at the institutional level, and facilitating faculty participation in interdepartmental initiatives. These suggestions support the needs of faculty (and ultimately, institutions) in light of the current climate characterized by public demands for accountability.

The environmental characteristics indicated by faculty as conducive to satisfaction include a congruence of values with the institutional mission; institutions are now being challenged to align their reward structure to maximize those conditions. Diamond's research on faculty reward systems (1993) advocates the evaluation of those programs (particularly for promotion, tenure, merit) against the criteria of their compatibility with the institutional mission. A reward system based on a definitive mission statement that is possible to achieve has the advantages of establishing campus priorities and contributing to a positive environment for students and faculty. Expectations for faculty work and performance should

be affirmed by an institutional climate wherein faculty work with administrators to redefine scholarship in order to encourage and facilitate their carrying out their complex responsibilities.

Administrators must not leave to chance that there will be among faculty a "coincidence of personality and organizational goals" (Bess, 1988, p. 146). Braskamp and Ory (1994) consider institutional mission to be an "important contextual factor" and emphasize that "a well-defined campus mission is becoming more important in academe" (p. 55). While anticipatory socialization into the discipline is developed during training at the faculty member's graduate institution, it is the responsibility of the employing institution to foster a healthy organizational socialization (Tierney & Rhoads, 1993).

Administrators must also be vigilant of the public pressures facing higher education and attuned to the impact of external forces on their institutions. Faculty and administrators need to participate in ongoing dialogue to be prepared for continuous environmental developments. Those in positions of leadership should embrace a mission-driven perspective that seriously considers the goals of followers by focusing on "the reordering of values through collective action" (Dill & Fullagar, 1977, p. 396). The challenge is to facilitate the enhancement of faculty performance in an organizational climate matching faculty autonomy and institutional values in order to prepare higher education, its constituents and society for the Twenty-First Century.

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Table A2

Means and Standard Deviations for Satisfaction With Workload

Carnegie Class	n	M	SD
Research	1346	.21	0.97
Doctoral	711	-.02	1.00
Comprehensive	1405	-.16	0.98
Liberal Arts	347	-.11	1.03
Total	3809		

Tukey HSD = .164, α = .01

Table A3

Means and Standard Deviations for Satisfaction With Autonomy

Carnegie Class	n	M	SD
Research	1346	.03	1.01
Doctoral	711	-.05	1.01
Comprehensive	1405	-.01	0.98
Liberal Arts	347	.10	0.97
Total	3809		